

CHRIST'S GLORIOUS KINGDOM

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The following is excerpted from our new book *Israel: Past, Present, and Future*:

"A Psalm for Solomon. Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Psalm 72:1-7).

"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight. And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised. There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth" (Psalm 72:8-16).

"His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen" (Psalm 72:17-19).

This is the most intimate picture of Christ Himself reigning in His kingdom that we have in Scripture. The previous passages we have examined describe Christ's kingdom, but this prophecy describes Christ Himself at the heart of it. Twenty-three times the Psalmist refers directly to the person of Christ ("he," "him," "his," "thou").

1. Christ will rule as David's Son. This Psalm was written by David for Solomon (see Psalm 72:1 and 72:20), and it looks forward to the kingdom of David's greater Son, Jesus. God promised David that his son would sit on the throne of God's kingdom for ever (2 Sam. 7:10-16). Part of the prophecy applies to Solomon (2 Sam. 7:14-15), but most of it looks beyond Solomon to Christ.

2. Christ will rule in righteousness, justice, and compassion (Psa. 72:2-4, 12-14). How different this will be from this present world, with its inequities, injustice, corruption, fraud, grinding poverty, lack of compassion, unpunished crime, and unrequited victims. The weak and poor and needy will be treated

with justice and compassion and equity. Injustice and unrighteousness will be punished quickly and forcefully with a “rod of iron,” and there will be mercy for the truly repentant.

3. Christ will rule in peace (Psa. 72:3, 7, 13-14). All of the peace movements, both humanistic and religious, cannot bring peace to the world as long as man is in rebellion with God. “There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked” (Isa. 48:32). Peace will only come when the Prince of Peace sits upon the world’s throne. Then peace will flow like a river (Isa. 66:12), and “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Isa. 2:4).

4. Christ will rule forever (Psa. 72:5, 17). The Millennial kingdom lasts 1,000 years, but Christ's kingdom will not end then. Once He returns to destroy the Gentile powers and take the throne of earth, He will never give it up. He will reign forever in the New Heaven and the New Earth (Revelation 21-22).

5. Christ will rule universally (Psa. 72:8-11). “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one” (Zech. 14:9). All nations will bow before Him and worship and serve Him. Each year the nations will come to Jerusalem to worship Christ during the feast of tabernacles, and if any nation does not come it will be judged with a drought (Zech. 14:16-19).

6. Christ will rule absolutely (Psa. 72:9-11). It will be a divine dictatorship, a Theocracy. There will be no elections, no people's rights. Christ’s Word will be the absolute law of the earth. Solomon’s kingdom was a foretaste of this. Whatever Solomon said was law. His decisions in all matters were final (e.g., 1 Kings 3:16-28).

7. Christ will rule gloriously and prosperously (Psa. 72:10, 15-16, 19). Verse 10-11 refers to kings coming from every direction bearing gifts. Tarshish is to the west (Spain), Sheba is to the east, and Seba (Ethiopia) is to the south. A “handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains” (Psa. 72:16) describes a bountiful crop even in the most inhospitable places. Compare Genesis 41:47. The fruit shall shake like Lebanon, again describing abundance, with Lebanon in the north being the most arable part of Israel historically. The term “glory” in verse 19 refers to kingly splendor and wealth. Christ will come in glory and sit upon a throne of glory (Mat. 19:28; 25:31). It refers to great beauty and wealth and splendor (Isa. 28:1; 63:1). Christ’s glory was foreviewed on the Mount of Transfiguration, when He “appeared in glory” (Luke 9:31). His “face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light” (Mat. 17:2). The Bible speaks of “Solomon in all his glory” (Mat. 6:29). His kingdom was the wisest and richest that has ever existed on earth. His wealth was such that silver was counted as nothing (1 Kings 10:21). Even his shields and throne were made of gold (1 Kings 10:16-20). When the Queen of Sheba came to see Solomon’s kingdom she was amazed and said, “Behold, the half was not told me”; she was so shaken by it all that “there was no more spirit in her” (1 Kings 10:1-7). Gold and other desirable goods were brought to Solomon from throughout the world, which he used to glorify his kingdom (1 Kings 10:10-12, 14-21) so that his wealth exceeding that of all the kings of the earth (1 Kings 10:23). But this is only a tiny foretaste of the great splendor and wealth of Christ’s kingdom. The beauty and wealth of this present fallen world will seem as nothing when we see Christ in His glory.

8. Christ will rule in the midst of worship (Psa. 72:15). This is no secular kingdom, no republic, no humanistic democracy. Worship of God will form its very heart and soul. Prayer will be made *for* Him to God the Father and *to* Him as God the Son. He will be the object of the world's worship, and all of the false gods of this present darkness will be forgotten. There will be merchandise in Christ's kingdom, but merchandise will not be the first thing in its citizen's hearts. God will have His proper place. The first commandment will no longer be ignored. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment" (Mark 12:30). No longer will men be rich toward themselves while ignoring God (Lk. 12:21). Then the world will not worship a multiplicity of gods, self being the chief of them, but the whole world will worship the true and living God and will offer to Him "the sacrifice of praise continually" (Heb. 13:15-16). Men will not only worship God continually but they will take time to worship Him whenever He requires. The Jewish sabbath will be kept. "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD" (Isa. 66:23).

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